



# Southeastern Idaho News

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA & POWER COUNTIES

## ECONOMIC TRENDS

The Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was unchanged in November at 3.5 percent. Mild, dry weather throughout the first half of the month allowed the completion of the beet harvest and continued construction activity, and retailers began hiring for the busy holiday season. Toward the end of the month, severe snowstorms halted construction as well as some holiday traveling but had little effect on jobs. Storms caused delays for Thanksgiving holiday travelers, school closures and downed power lines. Some areas were without power for more than 12 hours. Snowfall totaled between 14 and 18 inches throughout the region and contributed to much-needed snowpack in the mountains and water storage in the reservoirs that should help alleviate drought conditions this summer. Southeastern Idaho Table 2 shows unemployment rates for all Southeastern Idaho Counties in October, November and November 2004. From November 2004 all counties in Southeastern Idaho have experienced plummeting unemployment rates, a sign of economic growth throughout the area. In November 2004 only three of the seven Southeastern Idaho Counties had

Southeastern Idaho Table 2: November 2005 Unemployment Rates for Southeastern Idaho Counties

County	Oct '05	Sep '05	Oct '04
Bannock	3.4%	3.4%	4.3%
Bear Lake	3.1%	3.1%	3.8%
Bingham	3.7%	3.5%	4.4%
Caribou	4.3%	4.6%	5.9%
Franklin	2.9%	2.8%	3.8%
Oneida	2.9%	2.3%	3.2%
Power	4.2%	4.1%	5.8%

Southeastern Idaho Table 1: Pocatello MSA Labor Force & Employment Bannock and Power counties

	Nov 2005*	Oct 2005	Nov 2004	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
<b>INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE</b>					
<b>Seasonally Adjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	44,680	45,710	43,810	-2.3	2.0
Unemployment	1,570	1,620	1,930	-3.1	-18.7
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.5	3.5	4.4		
Total Employment	43,110	44,090	41,880	-2.2	2.9
<b>Unadjusted</b>					
Civilian Labor Force	45,040	45,120	44,160	-0.2	2.0
Unemployment	1,370	1,340	1,860	2.2	-26.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.0	3.0	4.2		
Total Employment	43,670	43,780	42,300	-0.3	3.2
<b>JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK</b>					
<b>Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS</b>	39,810	39,690	38,930	0.3	2.3
<b>Goods-Producing Industries</b>	5,650	5,670	5,720	-0.4	-1.2
Natural Resources & Mining	20	20	20	0.0	0.0
Construction	2,320	2,330	2,330	-0.4	-0.4
Manufacturing	3,310	3,320	3,370	-0.3	-1.8
Food Manufacturing	960	980	930	-2.0	3.2
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	150	150	170	0.0	-11.8
Machinery Manufacturing	80	80	90	0.0	-11.1
Other Manufacturing	2,110	2,110	2,180	0.0	-3.2
<b>Service-Providing Industries</b>	34,160	34,040	33,210	0.4	2.9
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	7,640	7,480	7,440	2.1	2.7
Wholesale Trade	1,290	1,290	1,280	0.0	0.8
Retail Trade	4,940	4,780	4,640	3.3	6.5
Utilities	40	40	50	0.0	-20.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,370	1,370	1,470	0.0	-6.8
Information	730	720	710	1.4	2.8
Financial Activities	2,120	2,100	2,100	1.0	1.0
Professional & Business Services	5,090	4,930	4,750	3.2	7.2
Educational & Health Services	3,140	3,110	3,040	1.0	3.3
Leisure & Hospitality	3,760	3,760	3,380	0.0	11.2
Other Services	1,260	1,260	1,230	0.0	2.4
Government Education	5,990	5,980	6,150	0.2	-2.6
Government Administration	4,430	4,700	4,410	-5.7	0.5

\*Preliminary Estimate

\*\*Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

unemployment rates below 4 percent. In November 2005 only one county, Caribou, had an unemployment rate above 4 percent, at just 4.3 percent. Most economists believe a 4 percent unemployment rate to be full employment.

The number of nonfarm payroll jobs increased by 120 in November for a total of 39,810. Construction continued a strong showing with 2,320 jobs for a loss of only 10 jobs from October. Retail trade and professional and business services added 160 jobs each in November as businesses prepared for the busy holiday shopping season. Also during

the month, government administration lost 270 jobs because seasonal parks, recreation and forest service jobs ended.

Over the year, the area has gained 880 jobs, even though manufacturing continues to fall behind last year's level. Job losses in manufacturing will continue throughout 2006 as Ballard-Kimberly Clark begins to lay off workers and closes its Pocatello facility. Heinz Frozen Foods will offset some of the Ballard job losses as it takes on a new line at its Pocatello facility and hires approximately 100 more workers throughout 2006. It is difficult to determine the exact number of jobs that will be added in manufacturing as some of those workers are placed by temporary staffing agencies and are counted in the professional and business services sector.

The service-providing industries gained 950 jobs over the year. Leisure and hospitality added 380 jobs as tourists returned to the area after a several-year decline because of Sept. 11 and the national recession. Professional and business services added 340 jobs, mostly in customer support centers and temporary staffing agencies while retail trade added 300 jobs because of new businesses that opened throughout the area. Job losses over the year occurred in transportation and government education. Jobs decreased in specialized trucking and transportation support services. Some of the trucking jobs were likely counted in professional business services as temporary staffing services provided truck drivers for harvest.

## **AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS**

### **Bannock County**

- Construction has begun on a new bathhouse at the Lava Hot Springs pools. The new \$850,000 bathhouse will replace the current facility and includes dressing rooms and a massage therapy studio. Construction should be completed by next June when the old bathhouse will be demolished. Future improvements include a new pool, new covers over the pools and heated sidewalks.
- Construction continues on the Idaho State University Rendezvous Center. The 225,000-square-foot center is five stories high and will house a student union, wireless Internet café, study space, classrooms, meeting rooms and student apartments. The building is designed to link lower campus with upper campus. The project should be completed in 2007.
- Portneuf Valley Family Center recently opened in Pocatello. The business provides day care and after school care for adults and children with emotional and behavioral problems. Three mental health care professionals formed the new company in October

and opened in December. The business also offers parenting classes.

### **Bear Lake County**

- Bear Lake County will soon have a kidney dialysis center. Ted and Liz Schmidt have given the Bear Lake Valley Health Care Foundation a gift to build and operate a kidney dialysis center in association with Bear Lake Memorial Hospital. Plans are underway with an estimated opening in summer 2006. The center will be able to care for six patients and will eliminate the need for patients throughout the valley to travel out of the area for treatment.

### **Bingham County**

- Moose Hotdogs and Fountain opened on West Bridge and North Broadway in Blackfoot. The unique business boasts the biggest variety and highest quality hot dogs in southeastern Idaho. The eatery and fountain offers a large variety of hotdogs, hamburgers and 50's style fountain drinks. They also offer continental breakfast.
- Blackfoot's Urban Forestry Council received a \$15,000 Idaho Department of Lands grant. The grant will be used to purchase 75 trees for Jensen Grove, replacing several diseased trees the city had to remove from there a couple of years ago. The project is the first of three phases. The next two phases will include planting trees along the greenbelt and removing brush and overgrowth on the south end of Jensen Grove. The grove lies east of Interstate 15 at Blackfoot and is a popular water recreation spot in southSeastern Idaho.

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